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STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

At the 3818th meeting of the Security Council, held on 18 September 1997 in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in Croatia", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council expresses its deep concern at the lack of substantial progress by the Government of the Republic of Croatia in fulfilling the conditions and tasks that are key to the transfer of executive authority to the Republic of Croatia in the territories of Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium, as noted in its resolution 1120 (1997) and the 23 June 1997 report of the Secretary-General (S/1997/487).

"In this regard, the Security Council calls upon the Croatian Government to meet its obligations and commitments and to take immediate action in the following areas: to remove all administrative and legal obstacles to the two-way return of all displaced persons as well as to the return of refugees; to ensure security and social and economic opportunity including property rights for all returnees; to take effective measures to prevent harassment of returnees; to implement measures to establish effective local government administrations; to ensure the regular payment of benefits to all pension and welfare recipients and open Croatian pension offices in the region; to ensure further economic reintegration; to initiate a country-wide public programme of national reconciliation and curb media attacks on ethnic groups; and to implement fully and fairly the amnesty law and cooperate fully with the International Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. In this context, the Security Council notes the recent information provided by the Croatian Government on intended steps to address some of these issues and urges the Croatian Government to implement these steps without delay.

"The Security Council emphasizes that the prompt completion of the tasks outlined above, as well as the fulfilment by the Croatian Government of its obligations under the Basic Agreement (S/1995/951), the agreements

between the Croatian Government and the United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (UNTAES), as well as the letter of the Croatian Government of 13 January 1997 (S/1997/27, annex), will determine the pace of further devolution of executive authority for the civil administration to the Croatian Government as well as further Council action. The Council urges all parties to cooperate fully with UNTAES and looks forward to the report of the Secretary-General due no later than 6 October 1997, as requested in its resolution 1120 (1997)."

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STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

At the 3819th meeting of the Security Council, held on 25 September 1997, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in Africa", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council met on 25 September 1997, at the level of Foreign Ministers, to consider the need for a concerted international effort to promote peace and security in Africa.

"The Security Council reaffirms its commitment to Africa in keeping with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. The Council also reaffirms the principles of political independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of all Member States.

"The Security Council notes that African States have made significant strides towards democratization, economic reform, and respect for and protection of human rights in order to achieve political stability, peace, and sustainable economic and social development.

"Despite these positive developments, the Security Council remains gravely concerned by the number and intensity of armed conflicts on the continent. Such conflicts threaten regional peace, cause massive human dislocation and suffering, perpetuate instability and divert resources from long-term development.

"The Security Council reaffirms the responsibility of all Member States to settle their international disputes by peaceful means and its own primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

"The Security Council welcomes the important contributions of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), including through its Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, and Resolution, as well as those of subregional arrangements, in preventing and resolving conflicts in Africa, and looks forward to a stronger partnership between the United Nations and the OAU, as well as subregional arrangements, in conformity with

Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. The Council supports enhancement of the capacity of African States to contribute to peacekeeping operations, including in Africa, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. The Council highlights the important contribution of the African Nuclear Weapons Free Zone Treaty to international peace and security.

"The Security Council fully supports the engagement of the United Nations in Africa through its diplomatic, peacekeeping, humanitarian, economic development and other activities, which are often undertaken in cooperation with regional and subregional organizations. The United Nations makes an important contribution to the efforts of Africa to construct a future of peace, democracy, justice, and prosperity. The Council underlines the importance of the commitment of the United Nations through the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other humanitarian organizations to assist the efforts of African States to address humanitarian and refugee crises in accordance with international humanitarian law.

"The Security Council considers that the challenges in Africa demand a more comprehensive response. To this end, the Council requests the Secretary-General to submit a report containing concrete recommendations to the Council by February 1998 regarding the sources of conflict in Africa, ways to prevent and address these conflicts, and how to lay the foundation for durable peace and economic growth following their resolution. Because the scope of this report may extend beyond the purview of the Security Council, the Council invites the Secretary-General to submit his report to the General Assembly and other relevant bodies of the United Nations for action as they deem appropriate, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

"The Security Council affirms its intention to review promptly the recommendations of the Secretary-General with a view to taking steps consistent with its responsibilities under the Charter of the United Nations."